

that President Ronald Reagan appointed him to fill in 1988. He served in that position with great distinction, to the benefit of Alaska and the entire Nation.

We will long remember the benefits from his legacy of continuing philanthropy. Elmer hired me back in 1959, my first job in banking. I worked for him as a branch manager at one of the small offices in Anchorage and later throughout offices in southeastern Alaska. We remained close friends through the 40 years that followed. His son Ed and his wife Cathy have shared many memories and good times with both Nancy and me.

Elmer's commitment to Alaska was evident in many ways. In the private sector, he was willing to take risks, commit capital to budding enterprises in Alaska. In the public realm, he gave of his time and fortune. Just last year, Elmer and his wife Mary Louise donated \$40 million to the Rasmuson Foundation so the foundation can provide grants to education and social service nonprofit organizations. He also gave another \$50 million to the Anchorage Museum of History which Elmer helped start. In fact, on his 90th birthday he gave away \$90 million. He also donated the largest single donation to the University of Alaska Museum in Fairbanks.

It is important to add that Elmer was generous in many other ways other than his wealth. He gave his time and effort to civic groups, including the Boy Scouts.

There is a saying that the true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit. That is the true test of generosity. By that measure, Elmer Rasmuson was an extraordinary individual in his generosity. Alaskans will remember him for generations to come. They, as Nancy and I, will miss him greatly.

IVETTE FERNANDEZ—MISS ALASKA USA 2001

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, congratulations are in order for a "Royal" Alaskan on my staff. Staff Assistant Ivette Fernandez was recently crowned Miss Alaska USA 2001 at the state pageant held in Anchorage. Ivette was judged in the interview, swimsuit, and evening gown competitions. Along with the title of Miss Alaska USA, Ivette also was honored with the Miss Congeniality title.

Born and raised in Fairbanks, Alaska, Ivette is the daughter of Antonio and Gloria Fernandez of Fairbanks. She is a graduate of Lathrop High School in Fairbanks and attended the University of Alaska Fairbanks before transferring to The George Washington University (GWU) in Washington, DC. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from GWU in the fall of 1999. Her future plans include attending law school and working in International Affairs.

As the new Miss Alaska USA, Ivette will represent Alaska in the Miss USA

pageant which will be held in early February in Gary, Indiana. Ivette will compete for the title of Miss USA with other young women from 49 states and the District of Columbia.

Upon winning the Miss Alaska USA title, Ivette won scholarship and wardrobe money, a free trip to the national pageant, and other generous prizes, as well as her crown and sash. However, this is not her first time wearing a crown. In April 1999, Ivette represented Alaska as our Cherry Blossom Princess for the National Cherry Blossom Festival here in Washington, DC.

My wife Nancy and I have known Ivette for many years. We are very proud of her and her accomplishments, and we know that she will represent Alaska with poise and distinction. Ivette is a pleasure to be around and a great asset to my office staff.

Mr. President, my staff and I want to wish Ivette the best of luck when she competes in the Miss USA pageant this coming February, and we again extend our congratulations to her on winning her title.

NATURAL GAS

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I note that the Energy Committee is contemplating a hearing on Tuesday on the spiraling price increases associated with natural gas. We are seeing a situation in existence now where we have terminated trading, for a portion of yesterday at least, in natural gas. I am told that natural gas was selling for about \$2.16 per thousand cubic feet about 9 months ago. Last month it was \$5.40; \$7 last week. Yesterday it hit a high of \$8.80. We really have a crisis developing in this country, not only from the standpoint of the adequacy of our natural gas supplies to meet our electric generation requirements but home heating as well, inasmuch as 50 percent of the homes in the United States are heated by gas.

I thank my colleague from Washington, Senator MURRAY, for the time she allotted me. I wish the Chair a good day and my good friend from Washington as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

A TRIBUTE TO SENATOR SLADE GORTON

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, as we all know congressional lame duck sessions following an election are a rarity. They usually arise when Congress is unable to finish its business in a timely fashion, and that is true with this year as well.

But this session affords me and this Congress an opportunity to acknowledge and pay tribute to the service of an esteemed colleague. Senator SLADE GORTON, the Senior Senator from Washington state, will be ending his service here after 18 years in the Senate.

Washingtonians—regardless of party affiliation—have come up to me with high praise and appreciation for Senator GORTON's long service to our state, our country and this proud institution.

I want to share with my colleagues a passage from an editorial this week in the Everett Herald. The Herald editorial reads,

History will rank Gorton with Senator Henry M. "Scoop" Jackson and Senator Warren G. Magnuson as an extraordinary leader in D.C. on behalf of the state.

Throughout his career in the Senate and state government, Gorton has been a leading force in many major efforts to protect the environment.

He also has been a consistent, passionate advocate for individuals with problems dealing with bureaucracy.

Within the Senate, Gorton has been a grand force for reasoned bipartisanship, never afraid to take a strong stand but also willing to work graciously and effectively with members of the opposition even at the tensest moments.

Many of our colleagues are well aware of SLADE'S history of public service. As a young man, SLADE GORTON moved to Washington state from Chicago almost 50 years ago.

He wanted to go West in search of new opportunities. And with \$300 and a one-way ticket on a Greyhound bus, SLADE GORTON moved to Washington State.

History has shown that this Midwest native fit right into Washington State. And like so many immigrants to our great State, SLADE GORTON was welcomed and given an opportunity to make the most of his talents.

From the very beginning, SLADE GORTON went to work on behalf of Washington State. First, he married Sally Clark from Selah, Washington. That same year—1958—SLADE went into politics and was elected to the Washington State House of Representatives where he rose to serve as the majority leader.

In 1968, he was elected attorney general of Washington State. On numerous occasions on several historic cases, SLADE represented the people of Washington before the Supreme Court.

Chief Justice Warren Burger once said that SLADE, "makes the best arguments before the Supreme Court of any Attorney General in America." He was also recognized with the prestigious Wyman Award given to the outstanding attorney general in the United States.

By this time, SLADE had also become a respected leader throughout Washington State.

After three terms as the Washington State Attorney General, SLADE GORTON ran for and won a seat in the United States Senate. He was elected three times to the United States Senate giving him an impressive record of winning statewide election six times in Washington.

All of this is offered as a brief history of SLADE'S many years of service. With time, there will certainly be many public tributes to Senator GORTON. But